

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 18-25 and 30-38 remain in the present application, of which claims 18, 20, 22 and 23 are independent. Claims 1-17 and 26-29 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 18, 20-23 and 25 have been amended. New claims 30-38 have been added. Applicants request consideration on the merits and allowance of claims 18-25 and 30-38.

I. Requirement for Election/Restrictions

The Examiner requires Applicant to elect a single species for prosecution on the merits under 35 U.S.C. § 121. The Examiner contends that "[t]his application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention."

Species 1	Figures 1-3	Claims 1-4
Species 2	Figure 4	Claims 5-8
Species 3	Figures 5-6	Claims 9-12, 14 and 15
Species 4	Figures 7-8	Claims 16-17
Species 5	Figures 9-11	Claims 9 and 13
Species 6	Figures 12-13	Claim 22
Species 7	Figures 14-16	Claims 18-19
Species 8	Figures 17-18	Claims 20, 21 and 23-25
Species 9	Figure 19	Claims 26-29

Applicant hereby elects Species 7 corresponding to FIGs. 14-16 and claims 18-19. However, Applicant submits that claim 18 reads on FIGs. 17-19 (i.e., Examiner's Species 8 and 9) as well, and requests that the restriction requirement between Species 7, 8 and 9 be withdrawn. Further, FIG. 16 (i.e., the Examiner's Species 7) is directly related to and results from Species 6 (FIGs. 12 and 13) operating on workpiece 5B or 6B as stated in the DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS section on page 10, lines 13-14 and

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27-29. In addition, new claims 31-33 (see cancelled claims 27-29) depend indirectly from claim 18, such that they incorporate all the terms and limitations of claim 18 in addition to other limitations (e.g., FIG. 19 (Examiner's Species 9)), which together further patentably distinguish them over the cited references.

Claim 20 is directed to the subject matter disclosed in FIGs. 14 and 15. Therefore, claim 20 should also be considered as belonging to Species 7. Since claims 34 and 35 depend from claim 20, they should also be considered as belonging to Species 7.

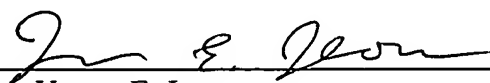
Claim 22 is directed to the subject matter disclosed in FIGs. 12, 13 and 16. While claim 22 is worded differently from claim 20, claim 22 may also be construed to read on FIGs. 14 and 15, and therefore should be considered as belonging to Species 7. Since claims 36 and 37 depend from claim 22, they should also be considered a part of Species 7.

Claim 23 is directed to the subject matter disclosed in FIGs. 17 and 18, which claim 18 (of Species 7) can also be construed to read on. Therefore, claim 23 should also be considered as belonging to Species 7. Since claims 24, 25 and 28 depend from claim 23, they should also be considered a part of Species 7.

II. Concluding Remarks

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests an early issuance of patent with claims 18-25 and 30-38. If there are any remaining issues that can be addressed over the telephone, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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